We have slipped the noose of Ragnarok.
For the first time in history, the Asgardians think themselves free from the whip of destiny...
We are free...yet Asgard remains. Even here, on Midgard's lowly soil, we are as we are.
Balder is good.
Thor is noble.
And Loki...is Loki.
Despite all my chaos--all my art--we are as trapped as ever.

IT NEEDS TO BE BURNED CLEAN.
ALL OF IT.

Latveria
BROTHERS? ARE YOU HERE?
AYE, LOKI. BUT WHY?
WHEN BALDER'S BLADE TOOK US, WE EXPECTED OUR PLACE IN HEL. WHY ARE WE STILL HERE?
I SUSPECT BECAUSE HELA HAS NO HEL FOR YOU TO GO TO. IS ALL WELL? ASIDE FROM SHEDDING THE...IMMORTAL COIL, OF COURSE?
NOT... MARRIED IN ANY WAY? A LITTLE HUNTED, PERCHANCE?
NO. WE WERE WORRIED THEY WOULD COME... BUT IT'S BEEN WEEKS, AND THERE IS NO SIGN.
PERHAPS THEY ARE BUT A MYTH, AFTER ALL?
AYE. PERHAPS.
OR PERHAPS THEY SIMPLY HAVEN'T NOTICED?

DO NOT LET IT BE SAID THAT LOKI'S HOUSE DOES NOT PROVIDE A GENEROUS TABLE.
NO! LOKI! WE SERVED YOU!
IN LIFE WE SERVED YOU!
YES, YOU DID.
AND NOW YOU SERVE ME IN DEATH.
WHAT DO YOU WISH OF THE DISIR?

MAINLY, TO SEE WHETHER YOU EXIST OR NOT. THAT YOU DO...
WELL, WHERE TO START? IT'S BEEN A LONG, LONG WHILE SINCE YOU DALLIED WITH ONE FROM ASGARD'S HALLS.
"BEFORE MY TIME--BEFORE THAT OF ODIN, WHEN MY GRANDFATHER WAS A YOUNG MAN...
"AS THE VALKYRIE WERE TO ODIN, YOU WERE TO BOR...
"BUT, IN YOUR UNNATURAL HUNGER, YOU BROKE ANCIENT LAWS.
"BOR FOUND YOU; THE CARRION WOMEN, WITH YOUR JAWS STILL WET AND JUICY WITH GOD-STUFF.
"HE FOUND YOU...AND CURSED YOU.
"BANISHED YOU."
YOU WOULD ONLY BE ABLE TO FEED UPON THE WANDERING SPIRITS OF GODS. SO, FOR YOUR GASTRONOMIC SIN, YOU WOULD BE FOREVER HUNGRY...
BECAUSE HOW WOULD ANY GOD'S SPIRIT NOT BE IN EITHER ASGARD OR HEL?
AM I RIGHT? IS THAT HOW IT GOES?

...NO ONE DOES.

ENOUGH. IT WILL BE AS YOU WISH. YOU ARE THE VICTOR.
NO. VICTORY IS A SMALL THING. THOR WINS.
I WANT MORE THAN THAT.
YOU WILL BE BOUND BY OATHS AS STRONG AS THOSE TO BOR.
YOU MAY NO SOONER DISOBEY ME THAN EAT THAT WHICH YOU MUST NOT, MY BRIDES....

Mephisto's Hell
ALL THE POWER OF ASGARD CURDLED WITH THOUSANDS OF YEARS OF BITTERNESS.
IT IS A RARE BLADE THAT CAN EVEN TOUCH THEM.
"TOTALLY LOYAL. CAPABLE OF MAGICAL ACTS, FROM CURSES TO SHAPE-SHIFTING.
"AH. THE FORMS THEY TAKE WHEN THE HUNGER FRENZY IS UPON THEM. QUITE THE THING TO SEE...
"NOT THAT THEY ACTUALLY NEED TO TAKE THEM.
"OF THE WONDROUS CREATURES, I HAVE A DOZEN AND ONE IN MY SERVICE..."

JUST ONE HAS SLICED ONE OF THE FINEST DEMONS IN YOUR LEGION INTO RIBBONS. YOU CAN'T TELL ME YOU'RE NOT IMPRESSED, MEPHISTO.
IT'S NOT IN MY NATURE TO BE IMPRESSED.
BUT IT IS IN MY NATURE TO BE COVETOUS...
AND LUSTFUL, FOR THAT MATTER.
YOU HAVE A DEAL IN MIND. STATE YOUR TERMS.
A DEAR ACQUAINTANCE OF MINE REQUIRES A LITTLE ROOM TO STRETCH OUT.
DEED HER A SLICE OF YOUR HELL FOR A THOUSAND AND ONE YEARS...
...AND I'LL HAND YOU THEIR LEASH FOR A HUNDRED AND ONE DAYS.

THIS IS A GAME, IS IT NOT?
IT'S ALWAYS A GAME, YOU, OF ALL CREATURES, KNOW THIS.
VERY WELL. WE ARE MASTERS AT THIS. CONTRACTS, MAGICAL AND BINDING. THE PRINT WILL BE FINE INDEED.
I WILL NOT FARE LOWER IN ANY SUCH DEAL...
THOUGH I ADMIT, THE MAIN REASON I WILL MAKE MY MARK WITH YOU AND NELA IS TO SEE WHERE IT LEADS.
YOU ARE MOST GENEROUS.
GENEROSITY IS NOT A THING TO BE PRAISED HERE, AS YOU KNOW. AND IF I TOOK IT AS THE INSULT IT WAS, YOU'D SCORE A POINT? CEASE, LOKI.
THIS FELLOW PLAYER...

"...MERELY WISHES TO HELP A FELLOW ARTISTE PREPARE HIS STAGE."
Asgard, Oklahoma
YOU KNOW WHAT I CALL THAT?
A TASK NOT YET COMPLETE...
A BRAGGING BREAK, LOKI.
HELA COMES.

YES. WHEN YOU MAKE YOUR MARK, LOKI, YOU WILL BE STRICKEN FROM THE BOOKS OF HEL.
YOU WILL BE HEL-BOUND NO MORE.

WONDERFUL.
WITH THE PROPHESIED END-TIMES OF RAGNAROK PAST, AN ASGARDIAN'S ONLY DESTINY IS A PLACE IN MY HALLS...
...A DESTINY YOU NO LONGER SHARE.

I MUST. AWAY. I HAVE ETERNITY TO TEND TO.

WELL DONE. BUT I HAVE TO ASK YOU--IS ABSOLUTE FREEDOM WORTH THAT MUCH? THIS MUCH RISK?

YOU OF ALL BEINGS SHOULD KNOW: FREEDOM IS THE ONLY THING WORTH ANYTHING.